

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 6199

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, MX

SUBJECT: W/W: ARREST AND DETENTION:

VISITS TO LECUMBERRI PRISON JUNE 16 & JULY 8

1. CONOFF VISITED THE FOLLOWING PRISONERS ON JUNE 26: JOHN LACHANCE, GEORGE FARRELL, CHARLES BEASLEY, ANDREW MIRGAOFF, DAVID MARTINEZ, ROGER RAINS, BARRY REID, DWIGHT WARBER, BILLY JOE SMITH, LESLIE FLEISHMAN, FRANK ZELLET, AND TIMOTHY KASCHNEY.

2. ON JULY 8 THE FOLLOWING WERE VISITED: FRANK ZELLET, JAMES CALHOUN, TIMOTHY KASCHNEY, EDGAR SHAFFER, CHARLES BEASLEY, MICHAEL GREEN, VINCE BALVIN, AND JOHN LACHANCE.

3. THE TENSION THAT WAS PRESENT IN DORMITORY "O" DURING THE MIDDLE OF LAST MONTH, AT THE TIME BEASLEY AND RENNA WERE SENT TO THE INTERIOR, SEEMS TO HAVE ABATED. IN FACT THE AUTHORITIES HAVE PROVIDED A POOL TABLE AND A PING-PONG TABLE FOR THE DORMITORY, NOT WITHOUT, HOWEVER, CHARGING RATHER STEEP HOURLY RATES FOR THEIR USE.

4. RENNA AND BEASLEY ARE REASONABLY HAPPY TO BE IN DOMITORY "F" AND SAY THE MAYOR THERE IS BETTER THAN MR. FERNANDO GARDINER IN "O".HOWEVER, THEY ARE NOT PLEASED ABOUT HAVING TO PAY 400 DOLLARS EACH FOR THEIR NEW CELLS.

5. STARTING WITH THE COMPLAINT ABOVE, CONOFF DISCUSSED SEVERAL CASES OF ALLEGED EXTORTION AND EXCESSIVE COSTS AT LECUMBERRI WITH ONE OF THE SUB-DIRECTORS. HIS REPLIES WERE SOMEWHAT UNIQUE IN THAT HE ADMITTED THAT EXTORTION
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IS TAKING PLACE. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE AND THE OTHER

AUTHORITIES AT LECUMBERRI ARE POWERLESS TO CONTROL IT AND THAT IF THE EMBASSY COMPLAINED DIRECT TO THEM, THE ONES TO SUFFER WOULD BE THE PRISONERS. HE ADVISED EMBASSY TO TAKE THIS UP AT VERY HIGH LEVELS OF GOM. THIS SEEMS TO IMPLY POSSIBLE IMPLICATION OF LECUMBERRI AUTHORITIES, WHICH OF COURSE HAS BEEN CHARGED FREQUENTLY. SUCH FRANKNESS AS THE ABOVE HAS RARELY BEEN SHOWN BY PRISON OFFICIALS AND SHOULD BE PROTECTED.

6. WE ARE CONSIDERING FURTHER STEPS ON THIS PROBLEM WHICH IS, OF COURSE, TIED IN WITH SUCH MATTERS AS CONFISCATION OF PERSONAL POSSESSIONS AND THE MAYORES SYSTEM.
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Margaret P. Grafeld
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